

# 'NOT IN OUR NAME'

## *Vexing Care in the Neoliberal University*

by Emily Jay Nicholls, Jade Vu Henry & Fay Dennis

*In this paper, we draw on our collaborative work running a salon for thinking about care in STS research, which quickly became more about fostering an ethico-politics for thinking with care as a mode of academic intervention. Not dissimilar to the origins of the salon in nineteenth-century France, the salon provided a provocative and disruptive space for early career researchers (ECRs) to think together.*

*As attention and critique increasingly point towards the unequal distribution of harms arising from marketization and the vulnerability of ECRs in the 'neoliberal university,' we have witnessed a surge in activities that promise a supportive space, such as pre-conference conferences, seminar series, discussion forums and self-care workshops. In this paper, we ask not only what these modes of care might make possible, but also what exclusionary practices and patterns they mask or render more palatable (Ahmed, 2004; Duclos & Criado, 2020; Martin et al., 2015; Murphy, 2015).*

*Reflecting on our experiences of organizing and participating in the salon, with the stated purpose to explore 'ecologies of care' as an embodied socio-material practice (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017), we move from care 'out there' in STS research to care 'in here'. We follow threads spun by and out from the group to rethink our own academic care practices and how to do the academy otherwise.*

**Keywords:** Care, slow scholarship, early career researchers, precarity, neoliberalism

**Author:** Emily Jay Nicholls, Department of Public Health,  
Environments and Society, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Jade Vu Henry, Centre for Invention and Social Process,  
Goldsmiths, University of London

Fay Dennis, Department of Sociology,  
Goldsmiths, University of London

**Licensing:** All content in NJSTS is published under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). This means that anyone is free to share (copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format) or adapt (remix, transform, and build upon the material) the material as they like, provided they give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.

## 'Not in Our Name': Vexing Care in the Neoliberal University

*On a frosty December evening, a group of us, as early- and pre-career academics (although the term sits uncomfortably given the uncertainty of such a 'career'), brought together through a mutual interest in science and technology, gather, through the security-protected doors, at the very top of a university tower block. Up there, on the peripheries, exposed and cold, we turn on the radiators and begin to think about and with care...*

### Introduction

In *Women Who Make a Fuss: The Unfaithful Daughters of Virginia Woolf*, Isabelle Stengers and Vinciane Despret (2014) draw on Virginia Woolf's (1938) *Three Guineas* to reflect upon the failure of the academy to shift in accordance with the needs of new entrants to the university. The authors write:

If Virginia Woolf speaks to us today, if she can help us to stand up to the test of orienting ourselves, it will not be in defense of a university subjugated to the market, forced to betray its democratic vocation. They will not make us forget that this university has failed to be transformed by the new arrivals who ventured to enter here. (2014, p. 28)

It is not only that the university has admitted newcomers (women, those less affluent, immigrants) without providing what is necessary for them to thrive. There is, argue Stengers and Despret, a broader, more systemic crisis in higher education which, although likely to affect these newer populations disproportionately, threatens an entire generation of entry-level scholars.

Gill and Donaghue argue that the academy is in a current state of 'psychosocial and somatic crisis,' riddled by 'chronic stress, anxiety, exhaustion, insecurity, insomnia, and rapidly increasing rates of physical and mental illness' (2016, p. 91). In the UK specifically, where our reflections are situated, researchers have documented 'increasingly unsafe' working conditions in higher education (see McKie, 2020), reporting high levels of stress and anxiety across the sector (Loveday, 2018; Wellcome Trust, 2020). These conditions, it is argued, are the result of 'neo-liberal practices of power in the Western University' (Gill, 2016, pp. 39–40), promoting managerialism, impact agendas, elaborate research accountability mechanisms and productivity regimes (see Morley, 2016).

At the time of this writing, academic, administrative and maintenance staff have carried out repeated and prolonged strikes to protest pension reforms and other measures associated with 'the neoliberal transformation of Britain's higher education system' (Bergfeld, 2018, p. 233). These measures include the tripling of tuition fees in 2010 as well as the introduction of national audit regimes such as the National Student Survey in 2005, the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014 and the Teaching Excellence Framework in 2017. These sweeping changes to UK universities are seen as consequences of an explicit government policy

agenda which places higher education in the service of economic productivity and understands students as consumers and future workers (Vernon, 2018).

A central element of this regime in the UK is the REF, an exercise carried out every six years with the purpose of assessing the quality of research in UK universities. This includes the assessment of research outputs, impact beyond academia and research environment. The REF has been described as producing 'docile yet highly individualistic academic workers' (O'Regan & Gray, 2018, p. 534), while valuing and promoting only *certain kinds* of academic work. As institutional performance in the REF is directly tied to university funding, 'being REF-able' is a status of particular importance for Early Career Researchers (ECRs) navigating an unforgiving and oftentimes disheartening job market. Indeed, for ECRs, who typically spend several years on fixed-term contracts before securing permanent employment (should they remain within academia), the increasing workloads, competition, and pressure to publish is experienced on top of chronic job insecurity and, for many, financial uncertainty (Loveday, 2018). As well as resulting in an increasingly competitive and high-pressure environment, this also often spills over into life outside of the university, as a recent report by Wellcome Trust identified that,

For early-career researchers there were often significant conflicts between their work and personal relationships. They felt that this was made more difficult by short-term contracts and a culture of mobility in which researchers felt obliged to live and travel across the UK and abroad. (2020, p. 39)

Here, academic life is not only lived according to the demands of impact agendas such as the much-maligned REF, but is also so often experienced as a need to be constantly on the move and an inability to put down roots or have an academic 'home' which can be expected to endure beyond the end of the next fixed-term contract. Moreover, the gendered construction of the '*real researcher*' – who has the 'right stuff' – requires a commitment not only to professional progress, but rather something more all-encompassing, as 'the great adventure of human curiosity presented to them as children is replaced by the theme of a vocation that demands body-and-soul commitment' (Stengers, 2018, p. 25).

In the context of this environment of competition and individualism, we wish to ask how we can make universities more hospitable

and in doing so, how might we do them otherwise. The aim of this paper is to use our experience of running an academic 'salon' about feminist theories of care to reflect on how 'care' might be thought and done in ways which resist these harmful aspects of academic life. We will describe how we, as new scholars of feminist technoscience, found ourselves engaging with different 'registers' of 'care' as we attempted to learn more about feminist scholarship. For example, we attempted to practice an 'ethic of care' in our collaborative working relations with each other, ones based on the values of maintenance, continuity, and repair (Fisher & Tronto, 1990). Care is also the object our research inquiry: we study the routine, mundane, or 'devalued doing[s]', often taken for granted, if not rendered invisible' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011, p. 92) and seek to care for our research participants through our feminist onto-epistemic commitments, methodologies, and writing practices (Martin et al., 2015). And finally, we ourselves have become the objects of care, as growing numbers of funders, university administrators, labour unions, professional societies, departmental mentors and scholars of higher education express concern about the precarity of ECRs in the contemporary academy.

In what follows, and in relation to our own experiences as ECRs, we shift between these distinct, politically charged registers of care, with the aim of thinking more critically about the work of 'caring' in the higher education sector. Maintaining that care is vital to the continuation of livable worlds, we want to follow Coopmans' (2020) lucid and aspirational example of caring for our own past academic work. That is, we wish to reflect 'care-fully' on how the small spaces and connections of our humble salon might enable flourishing, and to consider their value and the possibilities for us in rethinking care and higher education. At the same time, our reflective account aligns itself with 'critical care' scholarship in that it understands care as 'an affectively charged and selective mode of attention that directs action, affection, or concern at something, and in effect, draws attention away from other things' (Martin et al., 2015, p. 635). Although we are committed to honoring our collective work together, we also wish to put our experience as ECRs into conversation with the 'darker side of care'

(Ibid.) and avoid conflating care with affection, positive feeling or political goods. In this way, we aim to respond to Murphy's call for a 'vexation of care' which interrogates 'the ways positive feelings, sympathy, and other forms of attachment can work with and through the grain of hegemonic structures, rather than against them' (2015, p. 731).

We wish to 'stay with the trouble' of 'ECR care work' as an intended reparative for the increasing precarity experienced by entry-level researchers within the neoliberal university. These interventions, as we will argue, make working conditions for ECRs more palatable but fail to address the structural issues that enact inhospitable environments. These palliative forms of ECR care also enable an avoidance of the sociomaterial matters which make a difference, leaving the entrenched, historical tenets of the modern university unchecked in favour of strategies for coping or, alternatively, for better 'gaming' existing systems. We argue that feminist epistemologies can be deployed not just to attend to our own embodied, affective experiences as ECRs, but to also reconfigure the academy in ways that resist and subvert a neoliberal present, while transcending a gendered, colonial and militaristic past. In this way, we wish to humbly add our voices, albeit precarious, to a lineage of scholarship which connects Virginia Woolf to more contemporary feminist, postfeminist and queer scholars (see Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012), 'taking up the baton' from those who not only seek wider access, but have also 'worked at the university with the intention of transforming it' (Stengers & Despret, 2014, p. 28). In the words of Isabelle Stengers and Vinciane Despret 'This cry, "not in our name!" is the cry of men and women who refuse to see what is dear to them mobilized by their enemies' (2014, p. 22).

In what follows, we describe the academic salon we ran together and the ethos of care we developed and mobilised in the process. We then move on to contrast this with the forms of care enacted in response to the vulnerability of ECRs in the neoliberal university and, finally, close by suggesting what subtle forms of resistance may be better suited to making the university more hospitable.

## Methodological Sensibilities - Ecologies of Care as a Tool for Thinking

In coming together, our original intent was not to write a paper about care in the contemporary university. Rather, our initial goal was to use the format of an academic salon as an occasion to discuss critical care studies and to learn how to 'do' better critical care scholarship. Based in the Center for Invention and Social Process (CISP) at Goldsmiths, University of London, the salon we inherited has been running for over a decade, established in 2010 by two then-doctoral students, with the support of the directors of CISP at the time. One of them had been reading Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* and had been drawn to 'the idea of the "salon" as a social space created by smart women to foster

discussions and conversation,' and as a space for 'intellectual experimentation' (personal communication, November 2019). Since then, this forum continues to gather ECRs from different disciplines and substantive domains to think together in a relatively small, yet provocative and disruptive setting, not dissimilar to the 19th century Parisian salons depicted in Proust's classic novel. Running in the academic years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, the posters and other promotional material for the first year of our salon invited participants to gather to 'examine the politics of care in a variety of empirical settings, as well as identify different research methods that might be used to trace

and analyse these contested knowledge practices' (Centre for Invention and Social Process, 2018).

We chose two readings to launch and frame our year-long salon series. Michelle Murphy's (2015) 'Unsettling Care: Troubling Transnational Itineraries of Care in Feminist Health Practices' was selected as an example of an empirical world to explore, and to help sound our own 'clarion call' for more critical care studies. Isabelle Stenger's 'Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices' (2005b) would then serve as the 'methodological' reading for our first session. In this paper, Stengers puts forth the notion of 'ecologies of practices' as a 'tool for thinking' about the registers or networks of practice that constitute the ecologies of power, politics and the production of knowledge. Understanding power struggles, argues Stengers, involves 'approaching a practice as it diverges, that is, feeling borders, experimenting with questions that practitioners may accept as relevant, even if they are not their own questions' (2005b, p. 184). Reading Stenger's discussion of ecologies of practice through Murphy's 'vexations', we chose to call our salon series 'Ecologies of Care', with the hope of developing our own understanding of how the politics of care could be understood and studied as ecologies of divergent practices of care.

Our academic salon served as a living laboratory for us to not only talk about care, but to also enact caring relations which spun out beyond the salons themselves, leading to joint publications and conference panels, along with trips to pubs and restaurants, as well as dinners and stays at our homes in the UK and France. They also brought us closer to other ECRs and PhD students, as the ideas formed within the salons turned into calls for papers and opportunities for new forms of sharing and collaboration (e.g., London Conference in Critical Thought, 2019; Henry et al., in press). As we moved through different academic and non-academic spaces

together as collaborators and as friends, we developed a running commentary between us of what we had created and what it may enable. As the three of us realised that our engagement with feminist scholarship had heightened our awareness of how care circulated through our own lives, we came to connect the feminist scholars that we had embraced on a formal level with the more informal network of support that emerged between the three of us as ECRs. Turning to Stenger's 'ecologies of practice' to think and talk about our own challenging experiences in academia, we began to discern several distinct 'registers' of care. Care was: 1) a way of relating to each other as organizers and participants of the salon; 2) an object of scholarship; 3) a way of doing academic work; and 4) a way of objectifying us as precarious academic workers.

Due to the timing of this article and Special Issue, and the disruptions we faced in our second year of running the salon (which we describe later), we chose not to solicit input from salon attendees when preparing this paper. Rather than attempting to render an authoritative representational account of what happened during these salons, we aimed instead to engage in what Helen Verran calls 'participant-storytelling' (2001), assembling bits and pieces into a critical, albeit partial narrative or 'fable' to 'foster new kinds of discussions' and 'make a difference in the worlds [we] inhabit' (Kenney, 2015, p. 14). The running commentary we held between us is what we draw upon in this article, as we retrace the links and points of connection we have made when talking about and reflecting on our salon, as well as our broader experiences of university life. Our ongoing reflections have not focused only on our salons, but have also formed a space to vent and a refuge from times when the demands of the neoliberal university were felt most acutely. Here, we held on to the salon as a thing of value beyond impact agendas and instead relied upon it, and the collaborative labour which went into organizing it, as a space of possibility.

## Converging on a Feminist Salon – Caring for Each Other

We took up the responsibility of organizing the salon without necessarily appreciating the history from which its name had come. The idea of a salon can be associated with small, exclusive events convened by elite white women for their elite white guests, spaces far-removed from the socially-engaged, emancipatory aspirations of our academic feminist research. As Bodek recounts, salons served historically in France and the UK as informal universities for women:

[...] who when excluded from the educational mainstream created an alternative route which satisfied their desire to learn, while at the same time camouflaging their activities behind the acceptable female role of hostess. (1976, p. 186)

In this way, salons were liminal, gendered spaces that were excluded from the formal power structures of the aristocracy and

the emerging Habermasian 'bourgeois public sphere' (Kale, 2002). With the intellectual and political work of women confined to the private, domestic spaces of salons, Landes has concluded that the 'critical thinking' championed in the male-only societies, coffee houses, and newspapers of the emerging 'public sphere' gave rise to an 'essentially, not just contingently, masculinist' modern democratic state (1988, p. 7).

Virginia Woolf also expressed 'extreme skepticism as to the public sphere's capacity to represent or include women' (Fernald, 2006, p. 159). In Woolf's 1938 essay, *Three Guineas*, she argues that because women were marginalised by the university, government offices, and other influential institutions of the 'public sphere', their intellectual and political views were fundamentally incompatible with those of mainstream society. She asserts that the 19th century women who were relegated to salons and other educational

activities of 'the private house' were ultimately obliged to bolster a capitalist and militaristic patriarchy, arguing:

Consciously she must use whatever charm or beauty she possessed to flatter and cajole the busy men, the soldiers, the lawyers, the ambassadors, the cabinet ministers who wanted recreation after their day's work [...] In short, all her conscious effort must be in favour of what Lady Lovelace called 'our splendid Empire'... 'the price of which,' she added, 'is mainly paid by women.' (Woolf 1938, p. 32)

Our shared interest in feminist STS and our individual desires to succeed as new scholars *within* the academy were, we came to realise, at odds with the gendered and imperialist legacy of a 'salon'. But in ways also described in *Three Guineas*, we soon discovered that our liminal 'salon' served as a site of refuge from the demands and constraints of the neoliberal university. If universities are indeed as Woolf lamented: 'cities of strife' (p. 28) plagued by 'poisoned vanities and parades which breed competition and jealousy' (p. Ibid.), our salon, through its marginality, conferred us some freedom to experiment with what academic life might look like if we practiced an alternative, feminist 'ethic of care' (Fisher & Tronto, 1990). Operating at the boundaries of the academy, away from the gaze and interest of funding agencies, scholarly societies and many of our securely employed colleagues, the salon soon resembled what Woolf called an 'Outsiders' Society' where ECRs

could work care-fully, 'by their own methods for liberty, equality and peace' (p. 92).

As an 'Outsiders' Society' practicing an ethos of care, we strived to foster a caring community by engendering reciprocity, experimentation and joint investment in the outcomes of our scholarly activity. Our care-full engagement with routine academic practices and processes – choosing readings, booking rooms, designing posters, arranging speakers – was underpinned by ideals of feminist kinship emphasizing both difference and mutual obligation (Fisher & Tronto, 1990). We allocated tasks as they emerged, according to the differences in our training, experience and other time commitments, and trusted that the work of running the salon would be fairly-distributed amongst the three of us over the longer term. All of us in different levels of employment and precarity, and with different stresses, strains and responsibilities, the recognition of and honor given to these differences were key to the success of our mutual undertaking and were an important element of our feminist ethic of care. Given the relatively low profile of our collaboration within the wider institutional context, and the manner in which caregiving and care-receiving (Fisher & Tronto, 1990) blurred our public and private worlds, we ultimately embraced the notion of the 'salon' as a particularly apt and generative lens – or better yet, a transducer (Barad, 1998) – for thinking and writing about the ecologies of care which circulate through our lived experiences as ECRs.

## Thinking Differently through Care-full Academic Practices

In the ways described above, our salon interactions were guided by a feminist ethos drawn from a shared repertoire of academic literature (e.g. Fisher & Tronto, 1990; Despret, 2004; Stengers, 2005a; Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011; Murphy, 2015). Each of us had integrated this scholarship into her own line of inquiry prior to meeting each other and embarking on the collaborative work of the salon. As such, and inspired by Puig de la Bellacasa (2011), we wanted to exercise 'a feminist vision of care that engages with persistent forms of exclusion, power and domination in science and technology' (p. 91) and '[...] directs attention to devalued doings that are accomplished in every context by the most marginalized' (p.94). As part of studying our empirical sites of care 'care-fully', we had learned how to engage with material-semiotic concepts according to the emergent demands of our empirical research settings. Accordingly, we employed what we saw as a contingent, feminist approach to hosting our gatherings. As a care-full endeavor in and of itself, we set the topics and readings for the sessions, but then allowed the discussion to emerge as it would. This often meant that we would take off and beyond the readings that we had set, and our focus would twist and turn in relation to the interests and commitments of those who had chosen to attend.

Casting off from the first session of the salon, which we planned as an orienting session on critical care and ecologies of practices (Murphy, 2015; Stengers, 2005b), the threads of our discussions spun out freely over the course of a year into explorations of queer theory (Barad, 2015; Race, 2017), human-animal relations (Despret & Meuret, 2016; Giraud & Hollin, 2016), and grief and survival on a damaged planet (Poynor & Pfingst, 2016; Poynor, 2013; Tsing, 2012). Although as convenors of the salons, we took on the responsibility of selecting topics and readings, we attempted to anticipate and respond to the emerging interests of those in attendance. In the first salon, for instance, the group stumbled into a discussion of the ways in which queer theory and STS might connect and so we decided to orient the following session towards this topic.

Although our salons did draw a core group who attended most or all of them, they were also attended by a changing cast of characters, and we were never quite sure who would attend or what they might bring with them. In the introduction to *When Species Meet*, Donna Haraway (2008), describes how ethologist Thelma Rowell was in the habit of leaving out twenty-three bowls to feed her twenty-two sheep. Haraway describes this practice as 'making available to events; it is asking the sheep and the scientists

to be smart in their exchanges by making it possible for something unexpected to happen' (p. 34). For each salon we put out lures on our institutional website, on Twitter and through various networks, reached out our metaphorical hands, and then waited to see who would come and where our discussions would take us.

As we suggest in the following vignette, one session generated provocative and sustained dialogue on the matters of care in sexualized drug use and the gay party scene:

Taking up the invitation in the reading to 'think with pleasure' (Race, 2018, also 2017), one of the members paints a beautiful picture of his sexual encounters on drugs in which his body is opened up, desired and desiring, moving and receptive to being moved by others, to move as one, feel together, and *be* together in intensely pleasurable ways. He thoughtfully reflects on how care (rather than concern, say) is possible because he and those involved are invested in having a 'good time', and a good time relies on the pleasure of everyone. With this, he pushes us to think further on what care may be and the difference between service provision 'care' and peer-to-peer care, where there is a mutual investment in something 'good'. We discuss how an instrumentalization of care destroys what care is.

Much like the success of a 'good night out', our salons relied on mutual investment. Reflecting on this salon in a blog post, one participant commented that, 'I am inspired to conceive of care as a gamble, an extension of one's hand to other(s) in the hope that they might reach back' (Lim, 2019; see also Christianson, 2019). In a similar way, our decision to continue the conversation that had begun in a prior session was our attempt to 'reach back,' whilst also extending our own hands out into the world to see who would respond to our own invitation.

While most attendees were PhD students and ECRs studying and working at London universities, they were affiliated with a diverse range of disciplinary concerns including sociology, design, public health, anthropology, education and media studies, and had come from different countries such as France, Singapore, the US, Canada, as well as the UK. During discussions, attendees self-identified as Asian, African-American, white, gay, cisgender, mother, polyamorous, married and single, and ranged between the mid-20's and over 60's. They reflected on the salon readings through these identities, as well as through their expertise as scholars and activists in areas such as HIV, digital media, filmmaking, injection drug use, animal rights, and global health care services.

We were delighted that our 'care-full' provocation and mode of organisation generated such lively and heterogenous gatherings. However ephemeral, these forums opened up a plurality of perspectives and disciplinary approaches, distinct ways of attuning to the invisible, devalued labours that constituted the various 'neglected things' that we studied and cared for. We came away

with a new appreciation for how much our individual research inquiries could be enriched by the collective input of ECRs from such different horizons, and decided to use the salon as a vehicle to showcase the expertise of emerging scholars during the following academic year. In solidarity with new researchers, the salon would become a workshop about 'inventive methods' (Marres et al., 2018), where our fellow ECRs would share their research and provide attendees with hands-on guidance on the makings and doings of their care-full research. Unlike other well-funded seminar series, our salon did not feature established academics from distant universities, but instead sought to promote the work of much newer researchers who resided locally in London or were passing through for other purposes and wished to present their work in a warm and receptive setting.

The first salon workshop was given by Emma Garnett and Angeliki Balayannis, two ECRs working at the intersections of human geography, anthropology and STS. Drawing from their feminist scholarship on ethical research and environmental pollution (Balayannis & Garnett, 2020), they encouraged attendees of the salon to deploy creative practice and think with chemicals as kin in order to imagine new ways of relating with these non-human actors. They began by presenting their empirical work, foregrounding the neoliberal routes of toxic waste remediation extending across seas and lands. The speakers then tasked us with reassembling those sociomaterial configurations of dominance and exclusion. Using scissors, glue and anonymized copies of various documents and local photos, we were invited to create collages that put actors together in alternative, more-than-human and anti-colonial gatherings (Murphy, 2008). By re-directing narratives of chemicals through these creative practices, the aim was to engage with and enact critical care as an onto-epistemological mode of attending to neglected things: 'we must take care of things in order to remain responsible for their becomings' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017, p. 43).

This second year running the salon was first interrupted by industrial action across the UK university sector and then cut short by an emerging global health crisis. The former intended to challenge, in part, poor working conditions and increased casualisation across the sector; and the latter a crisis of wide-ranging and devastating effects that, within the context of academic life, will likely impact ECRs considerably and disproportionately. While we were running the salon, however, we ran it as an experiment to see what could happen if we practiced a feminist ethos of care to convene an academic event about care. From this experiment, we have learned that such a care-fully-run salon about care can create promising new spaces to engage in what Star has called 'methodological weaving', a mode of feminist STS research which integrates different strands of '[...] political action, poetry, art, social science research and consciousness raising' in order to '[...] open up academic writing and other forms of representation', and '[...] to stretch, to



co-develop our imaginations and thus build and weave new ways of knowing' (Bauchspies & Bellacasa, 2009, p. 336). We offer our experiment with care and the salon as one small way of 'taking up the baton' initially proposed by Virginia Woolf (Stengers & Despret, 2014). Unfettered by funding priorities and disciplinary boundaries, our rather unassuming and interdisciplinary salon has given us a

glimpse of what Woolf might have imagined when proposing an 'experimental' and 'adventurous' college: one which seeks '[...] not to segregate and specialize but to combine', and to '[...] explore the ways in which mind and body can be made to co-operate' as well as 'discover what new combinations make good wholes in human life' (Ibid., p. 27-28).

## ECRs as Objects of Care

So far, we have discussed 'care' as an ethos which motivated our interactions with each other and as a mode of contingent and inventive methodological engagement. In this section, we jump scales (Agard-Jones, 2013; Jain & Stacey, 2015; Lindén, 2020) to consider how we are also objects of care in the wider context of higher education. Funders, university administrators, labour unions, professional societies, departmental mentors and scholars of higher education have all expressed concern about the precarity of ECRs in the neoliberal academy (e.g. Herschberg et al., 2018; Locke et al., 2016; Maher & Sureda Anfres, 2016; McAlpine & Amundsen, 2017; Signoret et al., 2019; University and College Union, 2016). In tandem with this turn to the experience of ECRs and the marketization of the university, we have seen a surge in academic events aimed at ECRs in the form of pre-conference conferences, networking events and workshops, not dissimilar from our 'salon' at CISP. In general, these interventions propose to care for ECRs by providing: (1) capacity-building to develop the professional skills of ECRs; and (2) opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and support. Many of these interventions are likely to have arisen in part from the pressures put on funding bodies, universities and professional societies by ECRs to have their experiences and needs acknowledged and centred, and, we think, rightly so.

While these caring interventions seek to promote the kinds of positive peer-to-peer ECR interactions that we have experienced with our feminist-inflected salon, we pause and ask to what extent these efforts resemble the 'wellness' programmes rolled out by universities in response to a crisis of stress within universities. Gill and Donaghue have critiqued such wellness interventions as 'resilience courses' that attempt to 'address alarming levels of staff stress, unhappiness and overwork through a focus on individual psychological functioning' (2016, p. 97). We, too, are alarmed by the number of events for ECRs that currently centre on neoliberal discourses of 'self-care' and resilience. Here, we are reminded of Vik Loveday's (2015) work on class and gender in higher education, which not only foregrounds the unequal ways that hardships are distributed within the academy (see also Gill & Donaghue, 2016), but also highlights how these structural inequalities can become normalized and understood as personal deficits. Loveday argues that the production of anxiety in the neoliberal university also functions to make individuals feel personally responsible for their success or failure and asks, 'How is it that a problem of society can so easily be turned into a deficiency of the self?' (Ibid., pg. 4).

Extending this line of questioning, we wish to also ask: 'How is it that a problem of the academy can so easily be turned into a deficiency of the ECR?' (see also Loveday, 2018). Relying solely or even mostly on strategies that promote the resilience and self-care of ECRs does not turn back to ask the question of why such tactics are needed in the first place. Indeed, as The Great Lakes Feminist Geography Collective has argued (Mountz et al., 2015), our needs would be much better served by collective action and the restructuring of institutions than the individualized emphasis on behaviour-change. Returning to the analysis by Gill and Donaghue, we argue that such forms of care:

remain locked into a profoundly individualist framework that turns away from systemic or collective analyses and politics to offer instead a set of individualised tools by which to 'cope' with the strains of working in the neoliberal academy. These 'technologies of self' call forth an enterprising, self managed and 'responsibilised' subject who can 'manage time', 'manage change', 'manage stress', demonstrate resilience, practice mindfulness, etc. – whilst leaving the power relations and structural contradictions of the neoliberal university untouched and unchallenged. (2016, p. 92)

We are concerned that simply creating more forums specifically for ECRs *on top* or *outside* of the routine of the university works to further silo, marginalize and silence our experiences. These spaces of 'care' perpetuate the problem: ECRs learn how to cope with precarity, play the game or disappear and the higher education sector can feel satisfied that they have done their bit.

It is heartening and validating to observe the growing number of research publications, position papers and other reports documenting the experiences of ECRs and advocating on their behalf. The acts of caring about ECRs (cited at the beginning of this section) can contribute to more generative environments in higher education. But unless this research and writing is coupled with interventions that go beyond peer-networks and building skills and resilience, the continual re-telling of the ECR story may reify structural problems to the extent that they seem insurmountable, thereby exacerbating the production of shame and anxiety among new scholars in the neoliberal academy (see Loveday, 2016). We wonder if there might be more relational methods to care about and for ECRs which might also create more livable worlds for

the wider collective of actors who are situated across the higher education sector.

We are reminded anew of Stengers and Despret, who have noted that when consenting to the admission of girls, of those less affluent, and then of immigrants, entrance was offered only on the terms of the university:

If there has been a collective preoccupation, it has not been the transformation of the arrival of young people who were not pre-formatted 'heirs' into a dare, by offering them knowledge that would be worthy of them, or that which would open horizons other than that of joining the 'elite' as it has been defined without them or even against them. Rather, the preoccupation has been the threat of a 'lowering of the standard.' You are welcome on our terms, so that nothing changes. You are welcome as long as you do not make a fuss. (2014, p. 17)

We are, then, ambivalent about care interventions, including our salon, which seek to make difficult conditions in the university more bearable for ECRs without changing the system more broadly. That is, we are concerned that caring *about* and *for* ECRs in this manner will allow a broken system to keep ticking over, without offering or enabling space for others in higher education to think and do the academy differently.

However, and, while indeed ambivalent about the claims we are able to make about the care work we did in our salons, we were not driven by a desire to make our professional lives more palatable, but by a genuine excitement about creating a space of intellectual possibility amongst ourselves, and of fostering friendships beyond the requirements of 'networking'. Brought together by our collaborative task of running the salons, we also formed a friendship which was sustained by, but also expanded beyond them. As such, worked in and around our planning meetings for the salons, we helped each other to heal the personal and professional wounds acquired during our journeys through the academy: humiliating job interviews, the heartbreak of lost funding bids, the stresses,

strains and anxieties of precarious and uncertain professional lives and frayed identities. As The Great Lakes Feminist Geography Collective writes, 'commitments to slow scholarship fostered by academic alliances and friendships, can help us to come out of moments of depression or exhaustion, lest we drown in shame, loss, and discontentment' (Mountz et al., 2015, p. 1244). Stengers has suggested that 'slowing down' in the academy means:

[...] reweaving the bounds of interdependency. It means thinking and imagining, and in the process creating relationships with each other that are not those of capture. It means, therefore, creating among us and with others the kind of relation that works for sick people, people who need each other in order to learn – with others, from others, thanks to others – what a life worth living demands, and the knowledges that are worth being cultivated. (2018, p. 82)

'Slow scholarship' can therefore be an antidote to fast-paced systems like the UK REF, which are encapsulated in slogans such as 'publish or perish!' (see e.g. Mazanderani, 2019).

Although the three of us are in similar stages of our academic careers, our personal circumstances were and remain vastly different. As such, we return to difference as a key way for rethinking care within the academy. As both the neoliberal university and ECR care work often works to flatten out, individualize and marginalize the ECR experience, and respond to the 'problem' by building self-care, capacity and resilience (detailed above), our collaboration made room for our differences, structural and otherwise. Rather than working to build a sense of community based on shared identities, we held on to our differences, gave each other advice from our own perspectives, and distributed tasks and labour accordingly. The trust this required was, in some small way, its own resistance to the neoliberal individualism and competition we have described, as we focused on the success of our mutual undertaking as something of value beyond the potential benefits it might confer to us individually as academics.

## Discussion and Conclusion – Fleeting Mobilities and Defining a 'We'

Fisher and Tronto (1990) have noted the difficulties of reconciling feminist ideals of kinship and care with the hierarchical structures of the market and bureaucracy. In convening our salon, we were able to deploy an ethics of care that acknowledged the differences in our own nationalities, age, training, experience and other time commitments while working collaboratively to realize our equal potential as ECRs. However, while more and more actors across the sector are recognizing their responsibility to care about and for ECRs, we argue that much of the actual burden of change remains with new scholars. Prevailing forms of care from the wider university acknowledge that ECRs are *entitled to equality*, but still fail to engage with *differences* across the contemporary university

– differences in power, salary, job titles, disciplines, culture, and gender (see Fisher & Tronto, 1990).

Although we have critiqued how so much of the burden of change is placed on new scholars, we value how our work with the salon has allowed us to hold onto the possibility of something different: it has allowed us to enact forms of care and kinship which were attuned to the specificities of our distinct identities and circumstances. While our work together will appear on our curriculum vitae, job applications, and funding bids as 'evidence' of networking and academic citizenship – and while this article itself will render our work together more 'REF-able' – our feminist



collaboration was not motivated by a logic of what currency it would hold in the neoliberal university. Although we were not able to change the logic and structures of the wider academy, we were able to keep reminding ourselves of what **all scholars** have been promised upon entering the university: the time and space to think, to work together, and to rethink what might be possible. While doing so, we worked to honor and accommodate our differences in capacity, precarity and perspective, not only as a matter of taking responsibility for each other and our work together, but also because these things in turn broadened our thinking. As such and, we think because of this, we were able to form more generative connections with others, who came to the salons or who responded to our call to 'think critically with care': to develop and maintain relations of care as a site of critique and refuge from processes that seek to individualize, depoliticize and contain care as a personal (extracurricular) concern.

In describing our lived experiences as ECRs, we have attempted to articulate what Duclos and Criado describe as the 'ecologies of support from below and beyond' (2020). By rendering an account of the flickering and fleeting sociomaterial relations of feminist kinship that formed through our liminal salon, we have tried to foreground how feminist scholarship on care might generate '[...] semi-porous, world-creating media that support habitable life', '[...] inspire aspirational, drifting movements' and '[...] lift up and foster the creation of possible 'existential territories' (Ibid., p. 155). We shine a light on what Virginia Woolf has called 'experimenting in obscurity', providing glimpses of an 'Outsiders' Society' (1938, p. 35), a hidden, moving and ephemeral 'we' that sought to resist, in small ways, the hegemonic tendencies in the university by enacting a feminist practice of 'thinking with' (Stengers & Despret, 2014, p. 28).

Although the 'we' that was constituted through the salon has been a source of intellectual, emotional and spiritual enrichment, this paper is not a recommendation of 'strategies' or 'best practices' of care for ECRs in the neoliberal university (see Fenby-Hulse et al., 2019), nor do we wish to rehearse the well-developed critical and/or auto-ethnographic accounts which have resonated strongly with our lived experiences as ECRs (see Bowsher, 2018; Burton, 2019;

Powell, 2016; Thwaites, 2017). Indeed, much of our critique could be directed at the impulse for such recommendations, particularly where they fail to take difference of circumstance or positionality into account. Recognizing nevertheless that critique is best when paired with a call to action, we look to O'Regan and Gray who, when critiquing the REF, propose a 'resolute and vocal resistance, which consists, in part, of continuing to research and write in ways which are meaningful for ourselves as academics, rather than in ways which are supposedly meaningful for the REF' (2018, p. 546). While recognizing that such resistance may be more difficult and treacherous for ECRs, we hope to have nonetheless made the case for finding and creating these small spaces and ways of working which, if only subtly, subvert the logic of individualism which drives the audit culture of the academy.

In thinking about how 'we', as ambivalent ECRs, might 'take up the baton' of feminist thinking to resist the university in order to change it, we are inspired by Bacevic (2019), who argues that the transformation of higher education requires attending to how disputed boundaries are negotiated. This disputed boundary both includes and excludes us from the 'we' of the contemporary university, so that certain formations of care are validating and give us sustenance, while other mobilizations are ultimately 'not in our name' (Stengers & Despret, 2014). Here, we attempt to live along such fault lines, with tensions of care described, by looking for other 'double gamers' dispersed across the academy who 'slowly implement cultural changes to practice while they manage to remain relevant within their institution so that they can be the catalysts of that change' (Costa, 2016, p. 1006). While the burden of transforming the academy cannot rest entirely with ECRs living in precarity, we carry on with our engagements with feminist scholarship, generating feminist knowledge according to the rules of the contemporary university, while working to expand and diversify the webs of feminist kinship that defy it. In the words of Stengers and Despret, 'no triumphalism here, no call to sovereign freedom [...] And no denunciation' (2014, p. 151), because '[...] if we must pass on the baton, the "we" of Woolf, we must dare to "make" the relay; that is to create, fabulate, in order not to despair' (Ibid., p. 47).

## Acknowledgements

We are hugely thankful to everyone who took part in the salons, in particular, Adam Christianson, Bryan Lim, Annie Pfingst and Sarah Pennington. While we take full responsibility for our interpretations, it is in collaboratively thinking with other participants that this article was made possible. We would also like to thank the directors of the Centre for Invention and Social Process (CISP), Marsha Rosengarten, Michael Guggenheim and Alex Wilkie, for inviting and entrusting us to co-convene the salons. Some of the ideas developed in this article were first discussed following a set of panels we co-convened on 'Thinking critically with care' staged at the London Conference in Critical Thought 2019. We thank the panel contributors, the organizing committee, and CISP for supporting this conference. Fay would like to acknowledge the Foundation for the Sociology of Health and Illness and the Wellcome Trust for supporting her research at Goldsmiths.

We would also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful and generous comments and reflections on an earlier version of this article, as well as the editors of this Special Issue.

## Author biographies

Emily Jay Nicholls was a Research Fellow in the Department of Public Health, Environments and Society at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine at the time of writing this article, having since moved to the Department of Global Health and Development. Her work focusses primarily on HIV and this has included engagements with biomedical technologies, health activism, clinical practice and sexuality.

Jade Vu Henry is a Visiting Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre for Invention and Social Process at Goldsmiths, University of London. She researches the ethics and politics of digital technology in education and health.

Fay Dennis is a Wellcome Trust Research Fellow in Social Science and Bioethics in the Department of Sociology at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her work uses 'inventive' methods to explore embodied experiences of drug use and harm as a socio-material concern.

## References

- Agard-Jones, V. (2013). Bodies in the system. *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*, 17(3 (42)), 182–192.  
<https://doi.org/10.1215/07990537-2378991>
- Ahmed, S. (2004). Affective economies. *Social Text*, 22(2), 117–139.
- Bacevic, J. (2019). With or without U? Assemblage theory and (de) territorialising the university. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 17(1), 78–91.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2018.1498323>
- Balayannis, A., & Garnett, E. (2020). Chemical kinship: Interdisciplinary experiments with pollution. *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience*, 6(1).  
[https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/chemical-kinship-interdisciplinary-experiments-with-pollution\(2b165d57-9faf-4a81-8dec-aa2a14573d27\).html](https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/chemical-kinship-interdisciplinary-experiments-with-pollution(2b165d57-9faf-4a81-8dec-aa2a14573d27).html)
- Barad, K. (1998). Getting real: Technoscientific practices and the materialization of reality. *Differences*, 10(2), 87.
- Barad, K. (2015). TransMaterialitiesTrans\*/Matter/Realities and queer political imaginings. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, 21(2–3), 387–422.  
<https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-2843239>
- Bauchspies, W. K., & Bellacasa, M. P. de la. (2009). Feminist science and technology studies: A patchwork of moving subjectivities. An interview with Geoffrey Bowker, Sandra Harding, Anne Marie Mol, Susan Leigh Star and Banu Subramaniam. *Subjectivity*, 28(1), 334–344.  
<https://doi.org/10.1057/sub.2009.21>
- Bergfeld, M. (2018). 'Do you believe in life after work?' The University and College Union strike in Britain. *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*, 24(2), 233–236.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1024258918772692>
- Bodek, E. G. (1976). Salonières and bluestockings: Educated obsolescence and germinating feminism. *Feminist Studies*, 3(3/4), 185–199. JSTOR.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3177736>
- Bowsher, J. (2018). *Precarity in the neoliberal university: Some notes on the plight of early career academics* (USS Briefs No. 31).  
[https://ussbriefs.files.wordpress.com/2018/07/ussbriefs31\\_09072018\\_1600.pdf](https://ussbriefs.files.wordpress.com/2018/07/ussbriefs31_09072018_1600.pdf)
- Burton, S. (2019, July 24). Early career academics need more than patronising advice and vacuous assurances. *Times higher education* (THE).  
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/opinion/early-career-academics-need-more-patronising-advice-and-vacuous-assurances>
- Christianson, A. (2019, April 8). *Reflections from the second CISP salon* (2018–2019). CISP online.  
<http://www.cisponline.net/2019/04/08/cisp-salon-queering-care/>
- Coopmans, C. (2020). Caring for past research: Singapore, eye health care, STS, and me. *East Asian Science, Technology and Society*, 14(1), 145–152.  
<https://doi.org/10.1215/18752160-8234522>
- Costa, C. (2016). Double gamers: Academics between fields. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 37(7), 993–1013.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2014.982861>
- Despret, V. (2004). The body we care for: Figures of anthropo-zoo-genesis. *Body & Society*, 10(2–3), 111–134.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X04042938>
- Despret, V., & Meuret, M. (2016). Cosmoecological sheep and the arts of living on a damaged planet. *Environmental Humanities*, 8(1), 24–36.  
<https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-3527704>
- Duclos, V., & Criado, T. S. (2020). Care in trouble: Ecologies of support from below and beyond. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 34(2), 153–173.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/maq.12540>
- Fenby-Hulse, K., Heywood, E., & Walker, K. (Eds.). (2019). *Research impact and the early-career researcher: Lived experiences, new perspectives*. Routledge.
- Fernald, A. E. (2006). A feminist public sphere? Virginia Woolf's

- revisions of the eighteenth century. In A. E. Fernald (Ed.), *Virginia Woolf: Feminism and the reader* (pp. 85–115). Palgrave Macmillan.  
[https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230600874\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230600874_4)
- Fisher, B., & Tronto, J. (1990). Towards a feminist theory of caring. In E. K. Abel & M. K. Nelson (Eds.), *Circles of care: Work and identity in women's lives*. SUNY Press.
- Gill, R. (2016). Breaking the silence: The hidden injuries of neo-liberal academia. *Feministische Studien*, 34(1), 39–55.
- Gill, R., & Donaghue, N. (2016). Resilience, apps and reluctant individualism: Technologies of self in the neoliberal academy. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 54, 91–99.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2015.06.016>
- Giraud, E., & Hollin, G. (2016). Care, laboratory beagles and affective utopia. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 33(4), 27–49.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276415619685>
- Haraway, D. J. (2008). *When species meet*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Herschberg, C., Benschop, Y., & van den Brink, M. (2018). Precarious postdocs: A comparative study on recruitment and selection of early-career researchers. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 34(4), 303–310.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2018.10.001>
- Henry, J.V., Nicholls, E.J., & Dennis, F. (in press). Introduction: Critical friends and the choreographies of care. *London Journal of Critical Thought*.
- Jain, S. L., & Stacey, J. (2015). On writing about illness: A dialogue with S. Lochlann Jain and Jackie Stacey on cancer, STS, and cultural studies. *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience*, 1(1), 1–31.  
<https://doi.org/10.28968/cftt.v1i1.28815>
- Kale, S. D. (2002). Women, the public sphere, and the persistence of salons. *French Historical Studies*, 25(1), 115–148.
- Kenney, M. (2015). Counting, accounting, and accountability: Helen Verran's relational empiricism. *Social Studies of Science*, 45(5), 749–771.
- Landes, J. B. (1988). *Women and the public sphere in the age of the French Revolution*. Cornell University Press.
- Lim, B. (2019, April 8 ). *Reflections from the second CISP salon* (2018–2019). CISP online.  
<http://www.csisponline.net/2019/04/08/cisp-salon-queering-care/>
- Lindén, L. (2020). Moving evidence: Patients' groups, biomedical research, and affects. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 0162243920948126.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243920948126>
- Locke, W., Freeman, R., & Rose, A. (2016). *Early career social sciences research: Experience and support needs*. UCL Institute for Education.  
<https://esrc.ukri.org/files/skills-and-careers/doctoral-training/early-career-social-science-researchers-executive-summary/>
- London Conference in Critical Thought. (2019, July 5–6). *London conference in critical thought programme*.  
<http://londoncritical.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/LCCT-2019-Long-Programme-14.6.19.pdf>
- Loveday, V. (2015). Working-class participation, middle-class aspiration? Value, upward mobility and symbolic indebtedness in higher education. *The Sociological Review*, 63(3), 570–588.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12167>
- Loveday, V. (2016). Embodying deficiency through 'affective practice': Shame, relationality, and the lived experience of social class and gender in higher education. *Sociology*, 50(6), 1140–1155.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038515589301>
- Loveday, V. (2018). The neurotic academic: Anxiety, casualisation, and governance in the neoliberalising university. *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 11(2), 154–166.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17530350.2018.1426032>
- Maher, B., & Sureda Anfres, M. (2016). Young scientists under pressure: What the data show. *Nature News*, 538(7626), 444.  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/538444a>
- Marres, N., Guggenheim, M., & Wilkie, A. (Eds.). (2018). *Inventing the social*. Mattering Press.
- Mazanderani, F. (2019, March 29) *Publish or perish!* The Sociological Review Blog.  
<https://www.thesociologicalreview.com/publish-or-perish/>
- Martin, A., Myers, N., & Viseu, A. (2015). The politics of care in technoscience. *Social Studies of Science*, 45(5), 625–641.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0306312715602073>
- McAlpine, L., & Amundsen, C. (2017). *Identity-trajectories of early career researchers: Unpacking the post-PhD experience*. Springer.
- McKie, A. (2020, January 9). *UK academia 'increasingly unsafe' working environment*. Times higher education (THE).  
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/uk-academia-increasingly-unsafe-working-environment>
- Morley, L. (2016). Troubling intra-actions: Gender, neo-liberalism and research in the global academy. *Journal of Education Policy*, 31(1), 28–45.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2015.1062919>
- Mountz, A., Bonds, A., Mansfield, B., Loyd, J., Hyndman, J., Walton-Roberts, M., Basu, R., Whitson, R., Hawkins, R., Hamilton, T., & Curran, W. (2015). For slow scholarship: A feminist politics of resistance through collective action in the neoliberal university. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 14(4), 1235–1259.
- Murphy, M. (2008). Chemical regimes of living. *Environmental History*, 13(4), 695–703.
- Murphy, M. (2015). Unsettling care: Troubling transnational itineraries of care in feminist health practices. *Social Studies of Science*, 45(5), 717–737.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0306312715589136>
- Centre for Invention and Social Process. (2018, December 4). *CISP salon: Ecologies of care*. CISP on-line.  
<http://www.csisponline.net/2018/12/04/cisp-salon-ecologies-of-care/>
- O'Regan, J. P., & Gray, J. (2018). The bureaucratic distortion of academic work: A transdisciplinary analysis of the UK Research Excellence Framework in the age of neoliberalism. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 18(5), 533–548.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2018.1501847>
- Powell, K. (2016). Young, talented and fed up: Scientists tell their stories. *Nature*, 538, 446–449.

- Poynor, H. (2013). Landscapes of loss: Moving and mourning – An autobiographical account. *Journal of Dance & Somatic Practices*, 5(2), 169–177.  
[https://doi.org/10.1386/jdsp.5.2.169\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/jdsp.5.2.169_1)
- Poynor, H. & Pfingst, A. (2016). *In memoriam*. [Film].
- Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2011). Matters of care in technoscience: Assembling neglected things. *Social Studies of Science*, 41(1), 85–106.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0306312710380301>
- Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2012). *Politiques féministes et construction des savoirs: 'penser nous devons'!* L'Harmattan.
- Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2017). *Matters of care: Speculative ethics in more than human worlds*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Race, K. (2017). Queer chemistry: Gay partying and collective innovations in care. In *The gay science: Intimate experiments with the problem of HIV*. Routledge.
- Signoret, C., Ng, E., Da Silva, S., Tack, A., Voss, U., Lidö, H. H., Patthey, C., Ericsson, M., Hadrévi, J., & Balachandran, C. (2019). Well-being of early-career researchers: Insights from a Swedish survey. *Higher Education Policy*, 32(2), 273–296.  
<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-018-0080-1>
- Stengers, I. (2005a). The cosmopolitical proposal. In B. Latour & P. Weibel (Eds.), *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy*. ZKM/Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe.
- Stengers, I. (2005b). Introductory notes on an ecology of practices. *Cultural Studies Review*, 183–196.  
<https://doi.org/10.5130/csr.v11i1.3459>
- Stengers, I. (2018). *Another science is possible: A manifesto for slow science* (S. Muecke, Trans.; 1st edition). Polity. (Original work published 2013)
- Stengers, I., & Despret, V. (2014). *Women who make a fuss: The unfaithful daughters of Virginia Woolf*. Univocal Publishing.
- Thwaites, R. (Ed.). (2017). *Being an early career feminist academic: Global perspectives, experiences and challenges*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tsing, A. (2012). Unruly edges: Mushrooms as companion species: For Donna Haraway. *Environmental Humanities*, 1(1), 141–154.  
<https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-3610012>
- University and College Union. (2016). *Precarious work in higher education: A snapshot of insecure contracts and institutional attitudes*.  
[https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/7995/Precarious-work-in-higher-education-a-snapshot-of-insecure-contracts-and-institutional-attitudes-Apr-16/pdf/ucu\\_precariouscontract\\_hereport\\_apr16.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/7995/Precarious-work-in-higher-education-a-snapshot-of-insecure-contracts-and-institutional-attitudes-Apr-16/pdf/ucu_precariouscontract_hereport_apr16.pdf)
- Verran, H. (2001). *Science and an African logic*. University of Chicago Press.
- Vernon, J. (2018). The making of the neoliberal university in Britain. *Critical Historical Studies*, 5(2), 267–280.  
<https://doi.org/10.1086/699686>
- Wellcome Trust. (2020). *What researchers think about the culture they work in*.  
<https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/what-researchers-think-about-the-culture-they-work-in.pdf>
- Woolf, V. (1938). *Three Guineas*. Harcourt, Brace and Company.